THE EYE:

BY OBADIAH OPTIC.

——*VARIOUS OBJECTS FROM THE SENSE,*
VARIOUSLY REPRESENTING. MILTON.

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Whoever considers the number of absurd and ridiculous oaths necessary to be taken at present in most countries, on being admitted into any society or profession whatever, will be less surprised to find prevarication still prevailing, where perjury has led the way. RAYNAL.

THE following letter I with pleasure lay before my readers. The subject has for a considerable time engaged my attention, and in my opinion is highly worthy of the most serious consideration.

We, as a people, stand in a very peculiar situation: We have embraced a form of government which cannot be equalled in the annals of time past; and why not improve in morals as well as politics? We may boldly advance it as a truth, that no nation or people can become truly great, unless they be first truly honest.

MR. OPTIC,

I HAVE often thought, that nothing tends more to destroy moral rectitude than the frequent practice of swearing in courts of justice. As men desirous of advancing the public good, and diffusing happiness as far as possible, would it not be an incumbent duty on our legislatures to take this subject into their serious consideration, and if it should still be kept in existence, to tell their constituents what good results from the practice. Happy I am, when I reflect, that a very respectable class of our citizens are exempted from this degradation—but why should they be thus indulged? Surely not because they cultivate truth more than others—they themselves will not plead this; but they have religious scruples—that is right, and so should we all.

An oath, it is true, is a solemn appeal to GOD, not only to be a witness of the truth, but also to punish for swearing

falsely; yet what cares he for such an appeal, who makes a laugh of religion, despises morality, and practises all kinds of wickedness with greediness.

We will state, for sake of argument, that in a quarrel between A. and B.; B. is severely beaten; A. swears positively that B. struck him first, and on this oath a verdict is given against B. B. again comes forward and swears, without a moment's hesitation, that A. was the aggressor; here it is absolutely certain that both of them could not have struck *first*, yet before the same judge, A. is also cast! thus, both of them are right, and both of them are wrong, by the glorious uncertainty of the law, founded on oaths.

That which we have in the 15th Psalm, is perhaps the greatest character that can be given to a just man, "He sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not." But quere, would not this good honest man give the same testimony on *his word* that he gave on his oath? Is not a lie the same, whether before ten or ten thousand witnesses, and who are they, who in this world are not at all affected by false swearing? Assuredly it will be admitted, that they are those who disregard all oaths, set morality at defiance, and, as far as they can, live as they list.

The good man will tell the truth with, or without the oath: The bad man in neither way. If indeed the wicked man could always be thereby compelled to speak the truth, oaths would answer a very valuable purpose, but when on the contrary, they oftimes tend to strengthen the hand of the wicked, it is full time for Americans to put a stop to so irreligious a system of doing evil. The honour that the old Romans possessed, was not only great and dignified, but it puts to the blush every species of modern honour.—Our honour at present seems to consist in meeting our friend in the field, on some trivial account, or some rash expression, and shooting him through the heart, or head, no matter which, either will do. Not so their's, for on a very solemn occasion, when one of the assembly moved that they should all take an oath of fidelity, BRUTUS answered, "*No, not an oath, for he who swears doubts his own honour.*"

It is really astonishing to what an awful length false swearing has progressed in Europe—O morality! O religion! where are your influence? when you know it is there a proverb, "*I value it no more than a custom-house oath.*" In all our courts of justice, oaths, as HUDIBRASS has it, are but words

and what are words but *wind*—You swore very hard to day, said a man to his neighbour as a few days ago they came out of court; Me? replied the other, I did not swear at all: You did not swear? I heard you, and saw you kiss the book: O you fool no, no, I kissed no book, there I cheated them, I kissed my own thumb nail.

Our judges, our legislatures, our governors, our ministers of all denominations are called upon to examine this subject; perhaps these crude hints hastily thrown out, may lead to the investigation; if so the writer of this will be amply rewarded.

K.

ORIGINAL.

THOUGHTS IN A GARDEN.

—— WHAT a lovely, a delightful seat is here! lovely to the eye and delightful to the mind: The eye takes observation of sensible objects—and the mind turns that observation to improvement. This garden scene, pregnant with a rich profusion of flowers, long latent in the earth, but now springing up gives pleasure, and will soon be the garden of smiling nature; this pleasant declivity, a grass-plot, planted by the hand of Nature's self, exceeds the finest decorations of art and human ingenuity. What a charming prospect this little spot commands of the majestic Delaware, flowing in crystal currents and kissing the pebbled shore with repeated billows—and how delightfully do the adjacent blooming trees and verdant hedges present themselves to the view! bright Phœbus too, having entered the second stage of his annual circuit and now just passed his meridian tower, darts a mild, benignant ray to add to the agreeableness of the scene; the southern breezes gently stirring the leaves, afford a cooling refreshment; and, as they waft the ambrosial odours of the flowers of spring and the harmonious carols of the tuneful throng, give me the most agreeable sensations.

O, what an apt emblem of our primeval parents, in the first age of the world, dwelling in blissful Eden, while Innocence, Simplicity and Truth went hand in hand and blessed the social hours! Here by me sits the fair one, calculated by nature for my happiness, and only separated by small trees forming a commodious bower for the serene pleasures of virtuous love—methinks every thing conspires to render her

more lovely, and those pleasures more enchanting. The moderate temperature of the air gives her a genial warmth; and the declining sun, reflected from her pink skirt, clothes her smiling cheeks with pleasing blushes!—Her eyes partake of the blue tincture of the etherial, and convey to mine the beauties of the sky—while the excellences of her soul beam continually from them—her pretty little chesnut curls are waving lightly along her shoulders—the gliding air wafts them up and down, plays around her face, and in soft whispers tell the pleasurable theft of numerous stolen kisses. Surely this charming sight was enough to inspire love. But when her well informed mind displays her hidden treasures—when I hear the music of her tongue and the language of her heart—think, O ye stoics! could I be insensible to the fairest impressions? No, I feel my heart expand with new flowings in of love, which I can only express by my countenance—my affection glows with double fervency and gives me a secret delight, which ye cannot know—I feel the humble fire of my love gradually rising: It has long been hid behind the inauspicious lowerings of fortune—but I can now conceal my feelings no longer. Is this the fair one I have so often and so passionately desired?—and have I at last got an interview with her whose visage, when thinking on a situation like this some considerable time past would almost be clouded with aversion? O yes, the very same! She smiles, looks pleased and denies not conversation—what thrillings of joy elevate my soul! She approves—and surely she is not fettered by engagement!—Hope breaks forth—the brightest prospects rise before me—happy period!—all the face of nature as far as my eyes can carry me, seems to wear approbation!—Surely this is a part of that happiness I have so long desired—yes, to be

> With dear FLORELLA in some grove,
> And tell FLORELLA how I love.

But hence ye sensualists, I feel not your emotions—my present happiness is a compound of the felicity I long hoped to enjoy, and I rejoice to find the fruition so much beyond my most sanguine anticipation. Let the brutal sensualist riot in the jewel of unguarded innocence; let the voluptuary devote all his hours to his darling pleasure; let the debauchee revel in dissipation, and let the carnalist gratify the dictates of his corrupt inclinations, but, O my soul, be thou above these; virtue has charms which enchant for ever, and pure affec-

tions are the only source of substantial happiness on earth; be these thy objects, and their fruits thy reward—enjoy as now thou dost, the sincere delights of virtuous love, the grateful sensations of a divine source—and, if it seem good in the eyes of the blessed Father of the universe and great Disposer of events, be the indissoluble knot tied between thee and her, be thou united to her by the sacred band of connubial connexion—and wear the joyful chain of matrimonial union and endearment—then with love, tenderness and complacency mingled in thee, thou shalt go with her to the grove—conduct her to the fields and gardens of pleasure—be always with her—protect and cherish her—and like the first of men, thou shall enjoy in her, all the blessings, all the sweets, all the felicity that blissful Eden knew! PHILANDER.

SELECTED.

THE CORNISH CURATE; A TALE.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

(continued from page 274.)

IT being now the vernal season, I happened, one fine serene evening, to rove, with a book in my hand, to a considerable distance from home; till finding the shades of night suddenly surrounding me, I hastened to return. My nearest way was through tangled woods and unfrequented paths, and to this I gave the preference; but before I proceeded far, a female voice resounded from a neighbouring copse. Shrieks, entreaties, and prayers, which became more languid as I approached, seemed to be poured out in vain, and the voice died away in broken murmurs. With all the expedition that humanity could inspire, I flew towards the place; but, judge my surprise and sensations, when I beheld Olivia struggling in my brother's arms, and seemingly overcome by her exertions! At the sight of such an unwelcome intruder, my brother seemed confounded with shame; he instantly forsook his lovely prize; and, with eyes darting indignation, quitted the spot without uttering a single word.

Wounded to the soul with his baseness, and melted by the piteous situation of the lovely object who lay stretched on the earth in a state of insensibility, I was scarcely master of myself. However, I soon summoned a sufficient degree of reason to attempt her revival; and I had the happiness to find

that my exertions were not in vain. As she opened her fine blue eyes, and looked me full in the face, I felt an emotion which I had never before experienced. She started back at the sight of such an unexpected deliverer; and notwithstanding my utmost endeavours, relapsed into the same melancholy state. At length I again found means to restore her; when, bursting into a flood of tears, "Eugenius," said she "may every blessing attend your life! May Heaven shower its choicest favours on your head! and may some lovely and fortunate fair reward you virtue for preserving mine!"—"My dearest Olivia!" exclaimed I, with all the enthusiasm of love, "the hand of Heaven seems conspicuous in this deliverance; and, if I may presume to express the wish that lies nearest my heart, may the same power make me the everlasting guardian of that virtue which I have been so miraculously enabled to save!"—"My deliverer," returned the ingenuous fair, "is entitled to every acknowledgment I can make; conduct me to my father, and lodge under his sheltering roof the child who is at his disposal." With this requisition I immediately complied; and as we agreed that it would be prudent to conceal the rude assault of my brother, which the malevolent world might have represented more fatal than it really was, we resolved to ascribe the lateness of our arrival to the fineness of the evening, and the charms of the season, which had tempted us to linger beyond our intended time.

The apology was easily admitted; and as I was invited to stay, I eagerly embraced the offer, as well to pass more time in the company of Olivia, as to recover sufficiently from my perturbation of mind before I met a guilty brother's eye.

Next morning I took leave of Olivia and her father; and during my walk felt a dejection of spirits, and heaviness of heart, which could not have been exceeded, if I had been the perpetrator of villany, and not the protector of innocence. The mind seems often prophetic of its own fate, and intuitively to foresee the storm that futurity is about to disclose. I approached my brother with looks of indignation and pity; but, before I could utter a single word, unlocking his bureau, "Receive," said he "your patrimony, and immediately quit the house! I disclaim for a brother the wretch who can frustrate my wishes merely to gratify his own, and this under the more detestable mask of sentimental hypocrisy!" Stung to the soul, I replied, "The power who sees the rectitude of my views, and by my means has defeated the villany of your's,

will abundantly provide for me! I renounce an alliance with your ignominy, with the same pleasure as you disclaim me for a brother; but let me caution you to beware, lest your passions precipitate you into irretrievable ruin!" With these words I rushed into my mother's apartment; and, falling on my knees, besought her benediction, before the opportunity was for ever closed. Too well acquainted with what had passed, she bathed my face with her tears; and bewailing her hapless situation, encouraged me to hope for a speedy reconciliation, bidding me rely on her unalterable love.

Alas! she lived but a very short time to realize her wishes; for, within three weeks, she fell a martyr to her grief occasioned by the brutal insolence of my brother, in consequence of her partiality to me.

An outcast from my family, and equally disqualified by the delicacy of my feelings, and narrowness of my circumstances, from elbowing my way in the world, I scarcely knew which way to direct my steps. Love, however, which can illumine the darkest hours of life, prompted my return to Olivia, that I might tell her how much my misfortune attached her to my heart. I revealed to the dear charmer my true situation, and concluded by asking her advice respecting my future conduct. She immediately referred me to her father's superiour experience; and I accordingly communicated to him my fixed resolution of engaging in a cure, without assigning the most distant reason for quitting my brother's house. In consequence of this communication, I had in a few days the happiness to be informed, that an old gentleman, the rector of Crowan, a village near Falmouth, was in immediate want of a clerical assistant.

To him I presently applied, and without hesitation closed with his offer of allowing me twenty pounds a year: But as this sum would barely find me in board, my patrimony began rapidly to decrease.

Olivia, I need scarcely say, in the mean time engaged all my thoughts. Our love was mutual and sincere; and interest, that powerful incentive to modern contracts, was entirely overlooked by both, as her fortune was still inferiour to my own. In a few months she consented to be irrevocably mine, and then I thought my felicity beyond the reach of fate. From this pleasing delusion, however, I had the misfortune soon to be awaked; for finding my income very inadequate to my expences, I began to shudder at the thoughts of involv-

ing a beloved wife in want and misery. These gloomy presages were too soon realized by the death of my aged patron; an event which wholly deprived me of employment. This stroke was followed by the birth of a son; which, though it ought to have taught me economy, and stimulated my exertions, only tended to lull my cares, and deaden my sense of want.

After vainly endeavouring to obtain another curacy, and being disappointed in my expectations of a small living by the machinations of my now abandoned brother, Olivia's father was attacked with a paralytic stroke, which compelled him to resign the care of his cure to me. The whole amount of his living did not exceed four-score pounds a year, and consequently little could be allowed for the maintenance of a curate. My Olivia was again pregnant; when I found that, exclusive of some trifling articles of furniture and books, I had scarcely 100*l.* left; and, to add to my distress, a second paralytic stroke, and soon after a third, deprived me of a valuable friend; whose effects, when disposed of, and his debts discharged, produced only about three-score pounds for his daughter's portion.

Being now destitute of every friend, my brother remained irreconcilably inveterate; and a native bashfulness of disposition, for which the world is not always candid enough to make proper allowances, having prevented me from extending my connexions, or securing many friends, I was in such a distressful situation, that my mind began to sink beneath its burden, and to become weary of struggling with its fate.

The prospect, however, again brightened; and I obtained a very desirable curacy of thirty pounds a year, by the interest of a young baronet, who had accidentally seen Olivia and her two infant children, and expressed the warmest desire to serve us. As a present proof of his friendship, he applied to the rector of his parish, of which he was himself patron, to accept my services in the room of a young man, whom an unfortunate and ill-requited attachment had hurried to an untimely grave. *(to be concluded.)*

SELECTED.

AN ITALIAN FABLE.

FOUR animals, of different natures and humours; the stately horse; the ox, who serious and full of gravity, appeared a beast of quality; the timid sheep; and the long ear-

ed ass; were travelling together in a large sandy plain in search of adventures, and ready to die with hunger. At length, after a long journey, distressed, and almost starved, and with very doleful visages, they came in sight of a pleasant, green, and well cultivated land. No sooner were the hungry company within ken, than each began to whet his teeth, when lo, as they drew near, they beheld the beautiful field surrounded on all sides by a large ditch and thick quickset, whilst more disasterous still, at the only entrance, sat and ill looking, sour, brawny, muscled fellow of a farmer, with a stick in his hand, thick enough and long enough to drive away all love of eating in a moment. The generous steed, as soon as he beheld the club, found a *je ne scai quoi* rising in his stomach, which very soon gave him his dinner. The sheep trembled; the ox took time to think of it, but after a long deliberation, determined to keep at a distance from the stick. *Thus did they.*—But the ass, without thinking a minute about it, gave a leap and encountered the stick. In vain did the keeper bawl out, vain were the brandishments of his weapon, and vain its repeated falls on the hide of the animal, who keeping on his steady way, in spite of the horrid tempest falling on every side of him, found himself at length running about the flowery recess. There, lifting up his head in self exultation, and turning to his scornful friends who looked upon the success of the long-eared hero with envious eyes,—"*Learn of me*," said he, with a placid and composed countenance,—"*learn of me!*" THUS IT IS THAT FORTUNES ARE MADE IN THIS WORLD.

GENEROSITY.

IN the war carried on by Louis XII. of France, against the Venitians, the town of Brescia, being taken by storm, and abandoned to the soldiers, suffered for seven days, all the distresses of cruelty and avarice. No house escaped but that where Chevalier Bayard was lodged. At his entrance, the mistress, a woman of figure, fell at his feet, and deeply sobbing, cried, "Oh! my lord, save my life, save the honour of my daughters." Take courage, madam, said the Chevalier, your life and their honour shall be secure while I have life! The two young ladies, brought from their hiding place, were presented to him; and the family, thus re-united, bestowed their whole attention on their deliverer. A dangerous wound he

had received, gave them opportunity to express their zeal. They employed a notable surgeon; they attended him by turn, day and night; and, when he could bear to be amused, they entertained him with concerts of music. Upon the day fixed for his departure, the mother said to him, "To your goodness, my lord, we owe our life, and to you all that we have belongs by right of war; but we hope, from your signal benevolence, that this slight tribute will content you;" placing upon the table an iron coffer full of money. What is the sum? said the Chevalier—"My lord," answered she, trembling, "no more but 2500 ducats, all that we have; but if more be necessary, we will try our friends." Madam, said he, I never shall forget your kindness, more precious in my eyes than 100,000 ducats; take back your money, and depend always on me. "My good lord, you kill me to refuse this small sum; take it only as a mark of your friendship to my family." Well, said he, since it will oblige you, I take the money; but give me the satisfaction of bidding adieu to your amiable daughters. They came to him with looks of regard and affection. Ladies, said he, the impression you have made on my heart will never wear out; what return to make I know not, for men of my profession are seldom opulent; but here are 2500 ducats, of which the generosity of your mother has given me the disposal. Accept them as a marriage present; and may your happiness in that state equal your merit. Flower of chivalry, said the mother, may the God who suffered death for us, reward you here and hereafter.

A PECULIAR TEST.

A MODERN writer says, "I shall never believe that men were born for slavery, until I see *kings* produced with *combs* on their heads, like *cocks*, to strut and crow; and *men* with *hunches* on their backs, like *camels*, to denote their capacity to carry *burdens*."

A NOBLE CONFESSION.

IT was an elegant turn given by a lady, who was asked where her husband was, when he lay concealed for having been deeply concerned in a conspiracy, to reply, *I have hid him.* This frank confession drew her before the king, who told her, nothing but discovering where her lord was con-

cealed, could save her from torture. "And will that do!" said the lady. "Yes, (replied the king) I have given my word for it." "Then (said she) I have hid him in my *heart*, there you'll find him."

Poetical Department.

ORIGINAL.

THE WOODSMEN AND ASTRONOMER:

A SIMPLE STORY.

IN a rural retreat some miles from the town,
Far remote from the bustling throng,
Lived ALVIN sequester'd his name was unknown,
For Fame in his honour her trump ne'er had blown,
Nor poets his deeds made their song.

The rustics would wonder and strange stories tell,
Concerning this mystical man,—
How he in the magical arts could excel,
The dæmon who sway'd the dark sceptre of hell,
And exceed him in ev'ry plan.

Old HODGE, with a visage importantly sad,
The sage of the mountains was he,
Declared that the man was prodigiously mad,
And out of the country must quickly be had,
Or woodsmen in danger would be.

For see, quoth this sage, at the stars how he'll gaze,
And speak of the sun and the moon;
Then stand, like a hedger when struck with amaze,
Or, talk such odd stuff about 'vertical rays,'
And tell by a glass when 'tis noon.

Now surely, said HODGE, that he's crazed you must grant,
Or fools you all are I protest,
Since often you've heard of his outlandish rant,
And what proof to the point more plain do you want?
Shall he still the woodlands infest?

All together agreed the man was not right,
That something must quickly be done,

Lest he by his arts the whole world should affright,
And hinder the moon's free emission of light,
Or obstruct the beams of the sun.

A few were selected to whom was refer'd
The duty on ALVIN to wait,
To learn the true cause why from reason he err'd,
And tell him his conduct so strangely absurd,
Was dang'rous they deem'd to the state.

With gravity duly apportion'd with fear,
Th' embassy moved forward with care,
The wizzard to meet, for they thought it was clear,
He could call from his den the black fiend t'appear
Their bodies in pieces to tear.

Alas, how deceived!—what a pleasing surprise,
When ALVIN arose with a smile,
And civilly answ'ring their questions so wise,
Dispell'd from their minds ev'ry fearful surmise,
Which proved him no conjurer vile.

Thus ALVIN—'Astron'mers you've heard of I know,
Who almanacs make ev'ry year;
Of those then am I who tell how the winds blow,
When the rains will descend which make your fields grow,
And when an eclipse will appear.

'From nature, and books of deep learning, I find
The course of the moon and the tide,
The motion of planets, the change of the wind,
The hour of the day, and all things of the kind,
Sun's rising and setting beside.'

The party enquiring, astonish'd to hear
What ALVIN had said in defence,
Stood still and gazed at him, forgetting all fear,
Whilst HODGE who amongst them still wise to appear,
Allow'd what he spake was good sense.

Now, changed is the scene, they emblazon his fame,
His deeds are made known thro' the wood,
On hills and in vales his repute is the same,
Whilst the cottage obscure resounds with the name
Of ALVIN the wise, great and good. ALICIAN.